

Written Testimony of

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SB 254, An Act Restricting the Application of Fertilizers that Contain Phosphate

Environment Committee

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Good morning Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, Senator Roraback, Representative Chapin and the members of the Environment Committee. My name is Scott Ramsay, I'm the Legislative Chair of the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents. I'm here today to testify on SB 254, An Act Restricting the Application of Fertilizers that Contain Phosphate. Phosphorous is an essential, organic element necessary for plant growth. Used properly it is essential for a healthy turf environment. Restricting the use of phosphorous would create many consequences, both known and unknown. I respectfully request that golf turf be exempt from these restrictions.

Today's turf managers are far more aware of the potential impact of the improper use of Phosphorous than compared to only a few years ago. Technology and information has changed the way we as professional turf managers look at our applications to turf. We can more accurately measure, test and research the interactions between our turf and the adjacent environment.

Industry is already ahead of this legislation. Phosphorous free blends are available and gaining in popularity. The economics of today's market will not allow for phosphorous to be added to a blend because it is "traditional." If you don't need it why pay for it? Gone are the days of, "they put three numbers on the fertilizer bag (N, P, and K) and I want my money's worth." Resources are becoming very expensive and the research shows that, Phosphorous is only required in certain situations. It is now a financial and environmentally sustainable approach to turf management today, only purchase and apply what the plant requires.

So why do we seek an exemption. Real life challenges have developed in other states and caused unintended consequences. There are scenarios and situations where Phosphorous is an absolute need. New seedlings, sand based turf systems and other recommendations based on soil testing to name just a few. Quantifiable needs can be tested and professional turf managers need this tool to respond to deficiencies.

Golf is relatively a very small component of the overall Phosphorous market place and the industry is aware of the environment around us and is already adjusting to a "needs based" Phosphorous usage program. Many studies have shown that the proper use of Phosphorous is beneficial, golf turf is not a culprit, and the latest research backs this message. The potential impact to golf turf far outweighs the perceived potential benefits.